



Montana

Department of Labor and Industry

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GOVERNOR'S SAFETY AND HEALTH AWARD WINNERS

Governor Brian Schweitzer and Labor and Industry Deputy Commissioner Dore Schwinden presented the Governor's Awards for Safety and Health 2006 at the Annual Governor's Conference on Workers' Compensation and Occupational Safety at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort in West Yellowstone to the following employers:

Large Private Employer

- NewMech Companies Inc. - Construction Organization/ Mechanical Contractor of Helena

- Recognized for: Injury and illness rates below the national average, Worker's Comp Modification rate Factor .8, generate site specific safety and health guidelines in addition to corporate safety policies, conduct effective Job Safety Analysis that involve foreman and crew using "Safe Plan Action Form", conduct effective periodic job site safety inspections and daily audits, Forman and Project managers receive "Leading Safety for Excellence" training which reinforces the organizations Safety Culture beliefs and history.



- Blackfoot Telecommunications Group - Telephone/Voice and Data Company of Missoula

- Recognized for: DART and TCR below the national average. Complete and effective safety program and health/wellness programs are in place. Workplace safety has been added to employee performance reviews. Safety Committee exceeds requirements established by the Montana Safety Culture Act. OSHA guidelines and HR efforts are combined with requirements



of the MSCA to form a group committed to working with employee population to create a safe and healthy work environment.

Small Private Employer

- Simms Fishing Products - Fly fishing apparel manufacturers of Bozeman



- Recognized for: Focus efforts on - Hazard Detection, Prevention and Control, Safety and Health Planning, Evaluation, Administration and Supervision, Safety and Health Training, Leadership, and Employee Participation. Safety committee conducts safety audits each month and new employees learn the inspection process upon hire. “Near misses” are reported and investigated. Simms received the Governor’s Award for Safety and Health in 2003 and has participated in the Safety and health Achievement recognition program for over three years.
- Ironwood Manufacturing - Furniture manufacturer of Missoula



- Recognized for: The company’s Safety/Hazard Awareness program, introduced in 2005 and administered by the safety committee, has been successful in increasing employee involvement in the safety program and showing that workplace safety is everyone’s concern. The program keeps an open line of communication between management and workers and has also resulted in the company’s hazard prevention program. The hazard prevention program improves working conditions by: adding/repairing machine guards, improving markings in hazardous area, and other

preventive maintenance to prevent hazardous conditions. Notable benefits to the program have been improved forklift safety, better workplace lighting and better hazard awareness signage in the production area.

Mine Industry

- Spring Creek Mine – Rio Tinto Energy America - Mine sub-bituminous coal of Decker.



- Recognized for: All MSHA required programs are in place and met or exceed requirements. To promote employee involvement each employee is asked to perform one "Safety Interaction" per month. Two styles of Job Hazard Analysis are done. The first type is called "Risk Assessment". This is a formal process typically involving supervisors and employees. Critical jobs are assessed and control measures to reduce risks are put into place. The second type of JHA is called "Take 5". Employees are given pocket cards with steps for conducting a hazard analysis prior to performing routine tasks such as operating a vehicle or equipment.

Large Public Employer

- City of Helena – Municipality
 - Recognized for: Revised and adopted current Safety Policy on 1/25/2005. Have incorporated the Risk Management and Safety Department under Human Resources and appointed a permanent Safety Coordinator/Director to the city wide Safety Committee. Set up a budget and allocated resources such as a dedicated facility and media equipment for safety related training and meetings. Developed on-line safety training and testing to reach larger number of city employees with training events.



"The Governor's Awards are Montana's highest honors given to employers for excellence in improving safety and health in the workplace," said Kelly. "Those

receiving the award are recognized for their commitment to ongoing safety programs, involving their own employees in the development of the in-house safety plan and their efforts to enhance programs by seeking advice and assistance of qualified professionals at the state and federal level.”

Award winners are annually nominated by labor unions, trade associations, insurance companies and other entities. Many employers nominate themselves for the awards. The nominees are independently evaluated and rated by a panel of safety professionals who follow an objective method of evaluating safety programs and records.



ERD Administrator Jerry Keck, First Lady Nancy Schweitzer, Governor Brian Schweitzer, Labor Deputy Commissioner Dore Schwinden and Safety Bureau Chief Chris Catlett

Photos courtesy of Crystal Images Custom Photography, Big Sky, Photographer Janice Tate.